

WL MIT
Women's League



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

MIT WOMEN'S LEAGUE

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Mission Statement

The MIT Women's League, founded in 1913, strives to connect women in the MIT community through activities, interest groups, and volunteer opportunities, enriching their lives and the broader MIT Community.

Annual Meeting

Our Annual Meeting will take place virtually, on May 11th at 12:00pm. Julie Parker, Manager of the MIT Furniture Exchange (FX), is our featured speaker.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Last year as I wrote the Annual Report letter, I expressed that we were seeing times like we had never seen before. Staying at home, staying 6 feet away, and as the list of restrictions grew, the loneliness was affecting all of us. As I begin this letter in 2021 a lot has changed, and we are feeling better by the day as far as the pandemic is concerned. The fact that many of us can say "I've been vaccinated" is a shot in the arm of hopefulness. We cannot forget the tremendous number of those sickened by Covid-19 and worse, those who did not survive. Families whose lives are forever changed. The WL's hearts go out to all of those who have suffered during these difficult times, but we are so thankful to the dedicated people at MIT who kept our community as safe as possible. To list a few that helped during this past year, let us acknowledge the unbelievable medical staff, financial, housing, students, faculty, and staff but above all the Institute's leadership. All of this and more is the MIT community which makes us all feel like we have hugging arms wrapped around us, even during the most difficult times. To them I say Thank You!

Fall Fashion:

Unfortunately, the WL was unable to host some of our favorite events this year, but that did not stop our fantastic manager, Kirsty Bennett, from thinking outside the box. Because of her dedicated work, partnership, and ideas, the WL was able to successfully offer some fantastic events. One of the most heartwarming programs that brings together so many students in need who depend on the WL is the Fall Fashion Free for All. I do not think any of us missed the back breaking moving, sorting, cleaning, and hours of volunteer time, and we were able to offer over 100 students winter coats, hats, gloves along with Zoom apparel (a shirt or blouse for an online Zoom interview) to over 50 students. This was all accomplished through online requests, and the many members of the League who graciously purchased new items and had them mailed to students.

Wreath Making:

Our annual wreath making did not happen but that did not stop us, not one bit! Through a collaborative effort with the grounds crew and the Department of Facilities, the tradition of wreaths adorning the facade of 77 Mass. Ave. since the 1930s was kept alive, and some holiday joy was

added to campus. Thank you to all that made this happen as it was a big undertaking. Additionally, the WL's own craft extraordinaire Brenda Blais took the time to teach wreath making over Zoom — allowing participants to create their own wreaths at home.

A new set of engagement opportunities were created because we have been unable to gather. Skillshare Zoom meetings have become the new norm for the League. Thanks to the many people who have shared their skills, to those who have attended, and to Kirsty who makes all of these happen!

Annual Appeal:

I want to extend my gratitude to the many magnificent contributions that were made to the MIT Women's League Annual Appeal this year. I appreciate the dedication of our League members to support our efforts especially during the past year. Your support allows us to keep supporting our students and community. Last summer we provided support for CASE students, a welcome gift to those struggling with food insecurity over the break.

Over the past year, one silver lining has been witnessing communities coming together to support each other. There is a lot we don't know about the coming months, but as more of us become vaccinated, I remain confident in humanity's ability to overcome this significant global challenge and come out of it even stronger. To all of the members of the MIT Women's League, you have proven that your heart is a part of the MIT community. Thank you for all you give, care, and share.

With my warmest regards,

Cheryl Vossmer, *Chair*
MIT Women's League

SCHOLARS AND AWARDS

PKG Women's League Scholars Summer 2021

The Betty Johnson Fellow

**Einat Gavish (Mathematics, undergraduate, '22)
with Matthew Kearney (EECS & Philosophy,
undergraduate, '22)**

There is a tremendous amount of energy and motivation to address the world's pressing need for sustainability, but often individuals don't know what to do to have the biggest impact on the issue. There is currently an overwhelming number of solutions out there, many of which feel like they don't really make a difference. Working to combat these issues, Einat and Matthew created an online resource for individuals to determine exactly what they can do – personally, politically, economically, and more – to have the biggest impact possible on this issue, as well as tools and tips on how to follow through with those solutions. Their goal going forward is to use this tool to form a diverse online community of people who feel empowered to build a better future for the planet.

The Becky Vest Fellow

**Kavita Patel (Business Administration,
Masters student, '21)**

Kavita worked with the Small Enterprise Assistance Fund (SEAF), a nonprofit which supports high-impact economic development in emerging and frontier markets by investing in small enterprises who do not have access to traditional sources of capital. She was focused on the SEAF Women's Opportunity fund for Southeast Asia, which applies SEAF's gender lens approach to make investments in the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia. In addition to gender equality, the fund is expected to achieve key impact themes such as job creation, sustainable agribusiness, healthcare, education and environmental sustainability. Kavita focused on tasks such as financial and impact due diligence for prospective investments as well as impact value creation activities with existing portfolio companies.

IAP 2021

Andrea Diaz (Integrated Design and Management, Masters student, '21)

Over IAP, Andrea worked on an app-based system she has designed for seniors in Colombia, creating new local partnerships and developing the strategy to reach a larger population. The app helps the elderly population to access services and events virtually during the pandemic. Seeking to dignify aging and creating inclusiveness in technology in the least developed countries, the long-term plan of her social enterprise is to make technology more inclusive to the elderly and non-digital natives through the first super app designed for them.

<http://nonni.com.co/>

Maria Lucia Morelli (Urban Studies and Planning, Masters student, '21)

Maria worked with the Mexican organization Geochicas on an initiative called Calles Violentas (Violent Streets) which addresses violence against women in Mexico City. She designed an online survey which enables the organization to understand the characteristics of the built environment that correspond to women feeling insecure or unsafe. Maria Lucia also analyzed and reported on the survey results.

Laya Weisner Awards

The 2021 Laya W. Wiesner Award is presented to:

Anjali Nambrath '21

The 2021 Laya Wiesner Community Award was presented to:

Amy Brand, Director of MIT Press

Our warmest congratulations to all of our awardees!

PROGRAMS 2020–2021

**Guitar for Newcomers
with Elise Brown**

July 14

**Gardening Tips
with Cheryl Vossmer**

July 15

**Make Two Masks in
30 Minutes with Julie Parker**

August 4

**Ask the Chef
with Tim Healey**

August 12

Fall-Fashion-Free-For-All

September – October

**Food for Thought: Fun
with the English Language
with Laurie Scott
and Mariana Castro**

September 8

**Interest Group
Chair's Meeting**

September 9

**An Introduction to Gretchen
Rubin's Four Tendencies
with Jennifer Recklet Tassi**

September 15

**Children's Education without
School with Aleka Molokova**

October 6

**Beginning Embroidery
with Julie Parker**

October 15

**Breakfast Series with
Caley Horan**

October 21

**Honorary League Virtual Event
with Ritu Raman**

October 22

**All About Houseplants
with Sudhi Oberoi**

November 3

**Wreath-Making
with Brenda Blais**

November 19

**Astrophotography
with Amanda Bosh**

December 1

FFFFA: Winter Clothing Drive

Throughout February

Introduction to Card-Making

February 4

**Tracing Sicily's Multiculturalism
through its Cuisine with Sylvie
Scholvin**

March 11

**Breakfast Series
with Emily Richmond Pollock**

March 17

**Honorary League Virtual Event
with Margery Resnick**

April 22

**Decoding Representation:
Black Womxn's Sexuality
and the Struggle for Liberation:
Panel Discussion with the
Margaret Cheney Room**

April 28

**Sicily Through Art and Food
with Sylvie Scholvin
and Temenuzhka Dimova**

April 28

Virtual Volunteer Appreciation

May 5

**Women's League
Annual Meeting**

May 11

EXECUTIVE BOARD 2020–2021

Christine Reif Honorary Chair

Cheryl Vossmer Chair

Elise Perkins-Noel and

Mary Linan Officers for Programs

Danielle T. Reddy Officer for Service Projects

Jennifer Fleming Officer for Social Activities

Pamela Schickling-Buckley Treasurer

Ellen Stordy Nominating Chair

Sandra Boynton

Paula Cronin

Mary DesPrez

Jane Howard

Alison Hynd

Deborah Liverman

Chris Santos

Laurie Scott

Zahida Taher

WOMEN'S LEAGUE OFFICERS 2021

All Officers will continue in their current roles to ensure the continuing stability of the board during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Board continues the League's tradition of nurturing the growth of new ideas, which, in turn, supports the needs of MIT's community of women.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

In 2020, social activities took a hiatus so that MIT could prioritize safety during the COVID-19 pandemic on campus and beyond.

The May 2020 Annual Meeting and the 2020 Fall Open House were both canceled.

Looking forward to 2021, when we will host our very first Virtual Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 11, via Zoom, and are hopeful to return to an in-person Open House to welcome folks back to campus and into the Women's League.

PROGRAMS

In a year that begged for reinvention, we found new ways to meet and learn online. Over the summer of 2020 we developed a Skillshare series, welcoming members and friends of the Women's League to share a passion or skill with others. Attendees could make a donation to charity of the presenter's choice, if they wished. We hosted Skillshares on subjects as diverse as gardening, introduction to guitar, mask-making, embroidery, wreath-making, card-making, homeschooling, caring for houseplants, astrophotography, and the quirks of the English language. We also hosted two very popular programs about the art and cuisine of Sicily. While we miss our in-person events, it was wonderful to see how many people made time for these Skillshares, and remote events also increased accessibility to many of our members who lives further away from campus.

Elise Perkins-Noel
Mary K. Linan

Breakfast Series

Twice a year, we invite members to hear from a woman in the Institute, describe her career path and work at MIT. Due to the pandemic, this year we held the events virtually. A major benefit of being virtual was the ability to increase the number of attendees as we were not restricted by the limitations of the Emma Rogers Room, our usual space.

Our Fall speaker, Professor Caley Horan, is a historian of the United States who focuses on the cultural and intellectual transformations of the post-WWII era. Her first book explores the role of the insurance industry in shaping American institutions and daily life during the second half of the twentieth century. Her observations on the connection between astrology and capitalism in twentieth-century United States were fascinating.

In the Spring, we were fortunate to hear from Professor Emily Pollock, a music historian who studies how opera has evolved while keeping its links to the past intact. In her 2019 book *Opera after the Zero Hour*, Professor Pollock scrutinized opera in postwar Germany, where the reconstruction of society opened a space to help modernize the genre. Her riveting talk about

contemporary U.S. opera festivals and the artistic choices they confront, especially given the hardships due to the pandemic during the past year captivated one and all. We also found out that *Hamilton* checks off all the requirements of being a modern-day opera!

Both events were well-attended and garnered rave reviews that the speakers were authentic, engaging, and inspiring.

Zahida Taher, *Chair*

SERVICE PROJECTS

For over 100 years, service to the MIT community has been, and continues to be of primary importance to the League. In this unusual year, service was a particular focus, and our volunteers were engaged in the following League service projects. We are proud and incredibly grateful to have had their support, dedication, energy, and enthusiasm. These are remarkable women who make time, especially in a global pandemic, to make significant contributions to our community.

Danielle T. Reddy, *Officer for Service Projects*

CASE — Class Awareness Support and Equality

This past year our support of CASE has continued. In the summer of 2020, we distributed gift cards via Miri Skolnick and her team at the Division of Student Life. We also ensured students in the CASE organization were contacted when we distributed our winter clothing request form, in place of our regular Fall Fashion Free-For-All. We hope to continue to support CASE students moving forward.

Kirsty Bennett, *Manager, MIT Women's League*

English Conversation Classes

In the same way that many of our international students arrive at MIT and suddenly feel that they're "not in Kansas anymore," so our English Conversation teachers have been adjusting to a strange new world this year. Since MIT was entirely remote in the fall of 2020, we could not offer conversation classes.

That didn't stop our teachers, who had been meeting with the spring 2020 students via Zoom since March 2020. The informal meetings continued through the summer and fall, in hopes of returning to campus in the spring of 2021.

Since that wasn't possible, we instead offered free Intermediate and Advanced Zoom conversation get-togethers on Tuesdays and Thursdays for anyone with a present or past MIT connection. Registration was entirely online, and participants self-selected their levels. We had 43 registered participants, whose home countries included Brazil, China, Colombia, Egypt, El Salvador, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Nepal, Switzerland, Taiwan, and Turkey. Since all the meetings were via Zoom, participants were not restricted to the Cambridge area. We had students joining us remotely from as far afield as Georgia, Arizona, California, Belgium, China, Japan, Korea, Mexico, and Turkey.

In fact, one teacher, Vanitha Singh, moved to Florida in the spring of 2020, but nevertheless continued to lead her Zoom class. Many thanks to Vanitha and to Srirupa Mitra, who continued with her basic students, and Zoom teachers Fran Hutchinson, Laura Mali-Astrue, Mariana Castro, Ellen Stordy, and Mary Desprez, who has returned as a full-time teacher. We look forward to having Nancy Gutmann join us again when we return to campus.

The ever-popular English Partner Program continued remotely this spring as well. Thanks to the dedication and leadership of Kara Cunningham and her wonderful group of volunteers, all of our students who wanted a partner were able to be matched.

Respectfully,
Laurie Scott, *Coordinator*

English Partners Program

This year the English Partner Program (EPP) was presented with the same challenge that many other programs wrestled with: how to effectively pivot from an in-person format to a virtual format? The EPP volunteers rose to the challenge and they should be commended for their commitment to the program and MIT.

The Fall semester, in particular, was challenging. Remote work continued and many people were trying to juggle new challenges in their professional and personal lives. As English classes weren't offered in the fall, the number of students requesting a partner was much lower compared to previous semesters. Altogether, 13 English-language learners were paired with volunteers to practice English. Six pairs were continuing matches from earlier semesters, and it was encouraging to hear of these ongoing partnerships. Several were working to meet with students in different time zones and even on other continents. This is a testament to the volunteers' dedication to the EPP and the value that both volunteers and students find in the program.

The partners navigated how to best meet in a virtual format. Many pairs opted to use Zoom or FaceTime to converse and reported that the virtual meeting space was sufficient for their needs. Of the 13 volunteers, only one was new to the program. A number of volunteers had reached

out to say that they supported the program, but wouldn't be able to volunteer due professional and personal demands. I reached out several times during the Fall semester to check-in on volunteers who were matched with a student. In my communications I reiterated that if their circumstances changed, they should feel free to let me know and I would be able to find an alternate partner for their student. I am thrilled to report that all 13 volunteers were able to complete the semester.

The Spring saw the return of English classes and more students requesting English partners. I matched 25 students with 24 partners (one partner met with two students). Most of the volunteers had worked with the program before; two were new volunteers. Six pairs were continuing to meet from previous semesters and the remaining are new matches. The virtual communities established by different offices and departments on campus were great for outreach. A number of active volunteers posted in their group's Slack and, as a result, there are several prospective volunteers for the fall semester.

Similar to the Fall, some volunteers met with students outside of the Cambridge, MA area. The volunteers once more rose to the challenge to coordinate their meetings across different time zones and countries.

At the close of this semester, I hope to get feedback from the volunteers concerning lessons learned from the virtual format. I will use these lessons to inform aspects of the program moving forward, whether we're in-person or virtual. As the program has been virtual for two semesters, I feel confident that the volunteers will be able to take on either virtual or in-person formatting in the Fall, depending on the levels of community immunity. The volunteers have done a truly remarkable job this semester. They navigated the program in a new format while also juggling life in a pandemic. This is no small accomplishment— they deserve the thanks and appreciation that comes their way and I look forward to working with them again in the Fall.

Kara Cunningham, *Volunteer Coordinator*

Furniture Exchange

The mission of the Furniture Exchange (FX) continues to be serving the communities we encompass — MIT, Harvard, Boston University, Suffolk, Tufts, and Emerson while promoting sustainability and raising funds through our sales to support the MIT Women's League Scholarship. However, and this year needs a big HOWEVER, we closed down the MIT FX on March 10, 2021 and therefore have had no sales or donations since. Some highlights of a pandemic year:

- Our Facebook page is now at 3,367 likes and Instagram has 447 followers.
- I have been going into the FX, starting in the Fall of 2020, to rehab furniture found on curbsides and free lists, finished painting the facade of the building to delineate it from the MIT Mail Services, and stenciled and epoxied the floor.
- We have a wonderful new brochure thanks to Wing Ngan and Kirsty Bennett and are looking forward to distributing the brochures to busy campuses when we can all return.
- We have been having weekly “tea times” via Zoom and are up to our 36th meet-up. However, nothing is like seeing volunteers in person and we cannot wait to be reunited and to get to work with: Bette Johnson,

Carolyn Truant, Fran Miles, Gloria Pless, Jay Piper, Joe Rios, Keiko Kanda, Lisa Paltseva, Liz Torres-Rios, Natasha Paltseva, Zarrin Foster and Noreen Hagerty-Ford, and our dear movers from Your Move.

A special thank you to Kirsty Bennett, an incredible human who has been a bright light to me and the FX during this time. Thanks too to Cheryl Vossmer for her wise counsel, generous donation, and sage life/work advice, and to all the members of the Women's League for their help and support during this difficult year.

Of course we cannot wait to be back in touch with our loyal customers and generous donors. Thank you to the MIT administration who have been incredible in keeping us all safe and to the scientists whose development of the vaccine so quickly is a miracle.

Warm regards,
Julie Parker, *Manager*

Fall-Fashion-Free-For-All (FFFFA)

The 25th year of the FFFFA was a year like no other. This program has always relied on our ability to put students together in a room to find the clothes they need. A complete reinvention was necessary for 2020.

MIT allowed a small number of students to return to campus in the Fall, and those students would return home for the winter holiday. A new cohort of students arrived for the Spring session. This meant we had two groups of students who might need our support.

The FFFFA was reinvented as a spreadsheet – one for on-campus students, and one for off-campus students. Those on-campus could request winter clothing and a professional looking 'Zoom shirt', and those off-campus could request a Zoom shirt. The Office of the First Year and CASE helped distribute the form to students who identified as having the greatest financial need. Students filled out the form, and their data was anonymized. An email went out to WL members and friends with a link to a spreadsheet of requests. Those who were interested signed up on the spreadsheet for whom they could help, and then they were connected directly with their student to mail them what they needed.

The Fall program was a huge success. We found that our members passed on the email asking for

donors around their various departments, and a number of people who were not previously familiar with the League or the FFFFA wrote to say how much they appreciated the effort and hoped it would continue in future years.

Come Spring, we ran the program again, this time only to on-campus students requiring winter gear. This event was more time-sensitive, as it was already very cold when students arrived. Once again, we found the response from the MIT Community to be warm and generous.

This past year, we've helped 80 students get the winter clothes they need, and 100 students get the professional 'Zoom shirt' they need. In addition, for our Spring arrivals, we delivered winter clothing to the Office of the First Year, who handed out items to those who needed them right as they registered for the new term. We heard of a student whose luggage was lost on his journey to MIT, so he was able to take a coat right when he arrived.

As we anticipate a return to campus for the fall, and knowing it might be a long time before we can safely gather in a large group again, it's comforting to have this new model so we know we can still help the students who need it.

Kirsty Bennett, *Manager, MIT Women's League*

INTEREST GROUPS 2020–2021

Interest Groups and Activities

Several months into the Covid-19 pandemic, the Women's League continued to engage in many new ways to involve the membership in a difficult time when we could not gather. The Interest Group coordinators began the Fall term without our traditional annual luncheon. On this occasion we would normally enjoy gathering after the summer, sharing news and planning for the Newcomers Open House. Clearly, we could not hold our Open House. We did, however, gather by Zoom and shared our ideas for continuing or rethinking plans for each group. Many thanks to each of the group coordinators!

The Fiber Arts Group reported that Zoom meetings brought a few new members to participate including someone from Lincoln Lab. The Book Group also gathered their membership on Zoom and there were a couple of new people as well. Discussions continued to be lively and in their reading they traveled from Spain to Chile as well as the Deep South of the U.S. from the comfort of their homes. The Women's Chorale has also met on Zoom, unfortunately not singing in person, but creating a concert together which was circulated to their members. MITell continued virtually throughout the year with workshops, storytelling gatherings and informal meetings. Cityside Dining is on hiatus because of the pandemic, and will hopefully return in the Fall.

The Japanese Wives Group is continuing with the Friendship Partnership program which is keeping all its members, in both the U.S. and Japan, in touch with letter writing, emails, FaceTime, Skype and other means. It is so important to keep connected to each other.

Along with the several wonderful and varied Skillshares, the Interest Groups have been keeping Women's League members in touch with each other during this very difficult year. The annual reports of each Interest Group follow and contain further details of the activities of the past year. Now that so many have been vaccinated, we are all hoping that in the Fall of 2021 we can all gather once again in person.

Sandra Boynton, Chair

Book Discussion Group

The Book group had to convert to Zoom meetings in the past year. We were sorry to be parted from our friends, but a silver lining was that some MIT alums, who live far away, were able to join us for the discussion.

Each year we build a list of possible choices of books for discussion, of both fiction and non-fiction. The group then narrows the list down to nine books which we read over the Fall and Spring semesters. Every month a member leads the discussion, and all attendees are welcome to share their impressions and opinions. Our membership comes from diverse backgrounds and nationalities, which stimulates the discussion with the expression of many different ideas.

We hope that future meetings may be able to convene at MIT, rather than virtually.

Nancy Holloman, *Coordinator*

MIT Women's Chorale

Faced with the reality that choral singing was a "super-spreader" activity and that gathering together was not safe, and reluctant to give up their beloved activity, Chorale members explored ways to keep our group in touch and active in music. In the early summer of 2020, we met via Zoom informally several times to try a little singing together. Because of the Internet delay, we found this a very unsatisfying activity, although we welcomed the social interaction.

Our approach for the fall semester of 2020, and then continuing into spring of 2021, has been to have regular Zoom sessions on our traditional Wednesday evenings, hosted by our talented Music Director, Daniel Mahoney. The sessions have included an assortment of choral-related activities: warm-ups, ear training and music-reading exercises led by Daniel, informational presentations by him and our pianist, Leona Cheung, and singing while muted. For the latter, we sing with accompaniments played by Leona, or to a vocal line supplied by Daniel. These activities do give a bit of a sense of singing "together." Each session includes very welcome social time.

On Dec 12, 2020, the Chorale presented a Fall Musicale. This Zoom presentation featured solo and small virtual-group performances by some of our members, plus performances by Daniel (voice, classical guitar) and Leona. Since Leona's specialty is collaborative piano, her contribution was accompaniment of Daniel and of her professional colleague, soprano Jimin Park. This Zoom event was attended by over 80 "devices," with more than that number of people listening and watching, some from overseas. Additionally, Chorale members enjoyed a private recital the week before by Daniel, Leona, and Jimin.

A Spring Musicale is planned for May 8, 2021 at 5 pm via Zoom, and will feature a small virtual choir engineered by Daniel.

The Chorale generally experiences a degree of turnover from one semester to the next; many of our members are young professionals or their family members, and their careers have not yet settled down. Thus, it was extremely gratifying to have a considerable degree of support for our Zoom programs from more than two thirds of our regular in-person membership over the two semesters. Participation in any one on-line session is less than that, as many of our members are

"zoomed out" by the end of the day or otherwise finding pandemic life very taxing. Nonetheless, it is clear that the Chorale has a considerable core of singers who can be expected to return to rehearsals when conditions permit. It is our understanding that the Women's Chorale is the oldest continuously operating activity of the Women's League. We are very pleased that we have not had to interrupt that record!

Sally de Fazio, *Coordinator*

CitySide Dining

Due to a combination of state and MIT guidelines regarding Covid-19 safety, no CitySide Dining events were hosted in 2020. We hope to gather together again and support our local restaurants in 2021!

Honorary League

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Honorary League, with the help of MIT Video Productions held its first webcast on October 22, 2020 in lieu of the traditional luncheon. Ritu Raman, Postdoctoral Fellow in the Langer Lab, who had been scheduled to speak at the April 2020 luncheon, gave a presentation on “How I Learned to Build with Biology.” The event, hosted by Honorary League Chair Chris Santos, was attended virtually by a record crowd of 60 Honorary League members.

The spring 2021 luncheon will also be replaced by a virtual talk by Margery Resnick, Associate Professor in Literature at SHASS. Scheduled for April 22, her topic will be “In Praise of Autonomy: The Life of Katharine Dexter McCormick.” Hosted by Honorary League Vice Chair Nancye Mims, the Zoom presentation will allow Margery to interact directly with participants in what is anticipated to be a lively discussion.

Thanks go to Honorary League Vice Chairs Diana Garcia-Martinez and Nancye Mims and Women’s League Manager Kirsty Bennett for making planning a smooth process during a challenging year. And deepest gratitude is extended to the Office of the President for its continued generous support of the Honorary League.

Chris Santos, Honorary League Chair

Fiber Crafts Group (FCG)

The Fiber Crafts Group met via Zoom on the second Tuesday of each month during the past academic year as well as during the Summer of 2020. The meeting day was changed to accommodate some regular attendees who had conflicts with the Wednesday meeting times. Emails are sent each month to people who attend meetings as well as people requesting to be informed of meetings.

Our monthly meeting counts remain low, but new people have come to meetings in addition to our regular attendees. We welcomed two new members from Lincoln Laboratory as well as three new members from the MIT community who found out about our group through the WL shared posting with MITAC, the WL newsletter, and from group members. From what I understand, my monthly meeting email is shared among a Lincoln Lab group of crafters.

While there is no formal instruction, there is a wealth of “know-how” in our group that is generously shared. Past and present fiber crafters have worked on knitting, crocheting, cross stitching, embroidery, and quilting projects.

Olimpia Estela Caceres-Brown, a long-time member with a wealth of history knowledge of the FCG and former members, graciously accepted my offer to continue as a 2021–2022 Co-Chair.

We look forward to meeting again in person — in the meantime we will continue to connect via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Claudia LaBollita-James, *Chair*

Wreath Making

This was the year that might have put a halt to the annual tradition of making the large wreaths that hang at 77 Mass Ave every holiday season since the 1930s. We explored every idea and option we could think of, but there was no way for us to gather together safely to make them.

Enter the resilient and generous MIT Community. With a donation to MIT Buildings and Grounds, we were able to fund those staff who are still on campus to assemble and hang the wreaths. In the dark of a long New England winter, we hope the twinkling lights were a bright and uplifting sight for those on campus, or driving past.

Our sincere thanks to Sogna Scott and her team who helped make this possible, and to Ron Hoffmann who photographed the wreaths so those who were far from campus could share in the magic.

Kirsty Bennett

Community Craft Fair

The annual Community Craft Fair was not held in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope to be able to resume this activity in the Fall of 2021.

MIT Japanese Wives Group

The MIT Japanese Wives Group organizes the Friendship Partner Program, arranging introductory meetings for our members to exchange their culture with that of their partners. Due to the pandemic, in person meetings were no longer possible and as an alternative, we have launched a Pen Pal Program between members both here at MIT and in Japan. Our members exchange emails and share experiences from their different environments, and we hope they can build meaningful friendships through this program. Our current Pen Pal members are: Megumi Enokido, Sofia Caloggero, Asuka Yasutomi, Sharon Lin, Bette Johnson, Kristin Griffin, Kirsty Bennett, Norie Takada, Michiko Yoshida, Kyoko Maruyama, Takako Suhara, Yuko Tsay, Yuko Asano, Atsuko Pien, Clare Lee, Tseh- Hwan Yong, Misao Tanaka, Kimi Shirasaki and Kimie Shirasaki.

We have learned how important it is to feel close to each other through this program. We hope this will give our members many opportunities to help build lasting international friendships. Through this program, we were able to create strong ties in difficult times. No matter how far apart we are, we will always remember each other. While some people prefer email as a method of communication, others tend to prefer speaking over the telephone or via Skype.

For that reason, as a next step we would like to establish the Tancho Link program, which will facilitate cultural and experience exchanges via phone or Skype. In addition to MIT Japanese Wives Group-specific activities, we will also enjoy contributing to MIT activities throughout the year. Megumi Enokido, Asuka Yasutomi and Kimi Shirasaki donated origami for crane card making and more. Members in Japan are very happy to continue supporting their MIT counterparts and look forward to continuing to foster international friendships.

We had many more events planned for the year, both at MIT and in Japan that were unfortunately put on hold due to the pandemic. We were going to have group luncheons and a cherry blossom viewing party (Ohanami) in Tokyo this Spring. While those were not possible, we will continue to look for a good place for our next meeting in Tokyo, whenever that becomes possible.

This year our great Friendship Partner, Sofia Caloggero, retired from MIT. We wish we could have expressed our deep gratitude to her with an appreciation party. We will never forget her kindness.

I wish to express my thanks to Sofia Caloggero, Sharon Lin, Megumi Enokido, Keiko Noda, Chizu Ikeda, Asuka Yasutomi, Etsuko Hasegawa, Ritsuko Koide and Kimi Shirasaki for all of their help during the year.

I want to extend my special thanks to Kate Baty, Sandra Boynton, Keiko Kanda, Dee Ippen, Sis de Bordenave, Ellen Shapiro, Jennifer Recklet Tassi, Kristin Griffin, Bette Johnson, Tseh-Hwan Yang, and Kirsty Bennett for their advice and counseling.

Finally, Fran Elliott and Jan Kirtley passed away last year. We always appreciated their continued support and kindness.

Kimie Shirasaki, *Chair*

MITell — Storytelling

This past year MITell continued in virtual format — we hosted regular storytelling lunches throughout the Fall where members could drop in and share stories. I also collaborated with the McGovern Institute for Brain Research on their first ever Story Slam — an event where scientists at the Institute shared personal stories connected to the work and research. In the Spring, workshops were held for SHASS, Spouses & Partners Connect, and a program is upcoming for the Alumni Association.

Kirsty Bennett

ENDOWMENT AND OPERATING FUNDS

The MIT Women's League is administratively a division of the Office of the President, which pays the League's salaries and some office expenses. The League meets other expenses with income from its seven endowed funds, gifts to the annual appeal, and fees for programs and events offered throughout the year.

ENDOWED FUNDS

Emma Moore Fund

In 1916, Emma Moore, an Institute friend and board member of the Emma Rogers Association of Technology Matrons (the original name of the MIT Women's League), established the "Matrons Tea Fund" to underwrite teas offered to all women in the MIT community regardless of their ability to pay. Later she offered the income from the fund for "any use, social or otherwise" to be at the discretion of the League Executive Board. Today that income supports many League activities including the English Classes and the two League fellowships in the Priscilla King Gray (PKG) Public Service Center.

- Rebecca M. Vest PKG Public Service Center Fellowship
- Elizabeth W. Johnson PKG Public Service Center Fellowship

Margaret Compton Fund

The Margaret Compton Fund was established in 1949 to honor Margaret Hutchinson Compton, whose husband, Karl Taylor Compton, retired that year as President of MIT. During her lifetime, Mrs. Compton allocated the fund's income to such activities as the Westgate Nursery School and the Technology Children's Center. MIT has since taken over the management of the Institute's childcare facilities. Today, income from The Compton Fund provides unrestricted resources for League activities at the discretion of the League Executive Board. The fund has provided financial support for our Fall Reception for New Women at MIT, the annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon, Wreath Making, and the Student Clothing Program.

Laya W. Wiesner Fund

Laya W. Wiesner, wife of Jerome Wiesner, thirteenth president of MIT, was an ardent supporter of women at MIT and of the League. Laya wanted to recognize the contributions of individuals who helped shape the Institute's quality of life. Upon Mrs. Wiesner's retirement as First Lady of MIT in 1980, the League established this fund to show its esteem for her. To express appreciation for her leadership and her many years of service to MIT, the fund's income supports two individual awards.

The Laya W. Wiesner Award is given annually to an undergraduate woman "who has most enhanced

MIT community life, while at the same time maintaining a good academic record." This year, Anjali Nambrath (21) was honored with the award.

The Laya Wiesner Community Award, was established by the League in 1999 to honor Laya's legacy at MIT. This award recognizes "a member or friend of the MIT community for conspicuously effective service that reflects Laya's concerns for enhancing life at the Institute and in the world at large." This year, Amy Brand, Director of MIT Press, was honored with the award.

Lucille M. Ravven Memorial Music Fund

Dr. Robert Ravven established this fund in 1988 in memory of his wife Lucille, who conducted the MIT Women's Chorale from 1968 until 1980. It supports the Chorale including the purchase of its music.

Catherine N. Stratton Lecture Fund

The Women's League established this fund in 1994 to honor Kay Stratton's fifty years of commitment to the Institute and her tireless work to establish and sustain the Stratton Lecture on Critical Issues (no longer held), and the Stratton Lecture on Aging Successfully typically held each spring. Mrs. Stratton, the widow of Julius Adams Stratton, the eleventh president of MIT, was an active member of the lecture committees and of the League as well as the MIT Council for the Arts (another of her initiatives). The fund has received generous donations from current and retired MIT faculty members, the Green Foundation, the Exxon Foundation, and the MIT Women's League itself. Income from the endowment supports the lectures, which are free and open to the public. Funds in excess of the amount required for the lectures may be used for other League activities as voted by the League Executive Board.

Women's League Discretionary Fund

The Women's League Discretionary Fund was established in 1999 by Cleo and Paul Schimmel to support activities of the MIT Women's League at the recommendation of the chair. A former chair of the League Executive Board, Cleo's fondest dream has been to strengthen the "ties that bind" among League members and with the rest of the MIT community.

The Priscilla King Gray Fund

The Priscilla King Gray Fund, established in 2013 by the League on the occasion of its 100th anniversary, honors Priscilla, wife of Paul E. Gray, MIT's eighteenth president. Priscilla was honorary chair of the League at the time of this anniversary. Income from this fund has been used to supplement the two League fellowships in the Public Service Center. Priscilla, a co-founder of the Public Service Center, remains an active advocate for its work. The PSC was renamed the Priscilla King Gray Public Service Center in 2015.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

MIT Women's League Scholarship Fund

Established in 1960 as the Technology Matrons' Student Aid Fund and later known as the MIT Student Loan Fund, this endowment is now the MIT Women's League Scholarship Fund. The interest from the fund provides scholarship aid annually for women undergraduate students. The fund benefits from the proceeds of the Furniture Exchange and the Community Holiday Craft Fair. The League Scholarship Fund now exceeds \$1 million and in 2021 it supported three undergraduate women

TREASURER'S REPORT

The annual budget for the MIT Women's League in FY 2021, less personnel related expenses, and totaled \$52,462. Sources of funds included an MIT allocation of \$6,000, allocations of \$38,662 from expendable balances in League endowed fund accounts, and \$7,800 from the Leagues Programs and Activities Fund. This year at the end of the third quarter, the annual appeal had raised \$10,463 in gifts for the Women's League. The League is extremely grateful to all of its donors for their continued support and confidence in the League's programs and services to the MIT community.

Through these funds, the League provides many benefits to the Institute including an annual contribution of \$8,800 to the Priscilla King Gray Public Service Center for the Rebecca M. Vest and Elizabeth W. Johnson Fellowships, and the awarding of the annual Laya Wiesner Awards of \$1,500 each to an MIT undergraduate student and a long-time staff member. Other League services in FY2021 included virtual English Conversation Get-Togethers, a wide array of Skillshares offered via Zoom, and virtual Interest Groups and Breakfast Series. Additionally, we partnered with Facilities to help Light up the Night at 77 Massachusetts Avenue with festive wreaths during the holiday season, a Women's League annual tradition.

During this academic year, three undergraduate women students benefited from the Women's League Scholarship Fund, which distributed \$89,831 in aid. The scholarship's endowment now totals \$1,083,105.

At the end of the third quarter of FY2021, the combined fund value of the League's seven endowed funds was \$377,905. This includes \$82,475 in the Priscilla King Gray Fund. Expendable income from these funds supports the Wiesner Awards, the Stratton Lecture Series, the Vest and Johnson PSC Fellowships, the MIT Women's Chorale, and the League's annual operations.

This data reflects third quarter results for FY2021. The final Women's League Treasurer's Report will be available in the Women's League Office, soon after the MIT fiscal year closing on June 30.

Pamela Schickling Buckley, *Treasurer*



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